

*Botanico-Periodicum-Huntianum*. Edited by GEORGE H. M. LAWRENCE, A. F. GÜNTHER BUCHHEIM, GILBERT S. DANIELS, and HELMUT DOLEZAL. 1063 pp. Hunt Botanical Library, Pittsburgh, Penn. 1968. Available through Stechert-Hafner Service Agency, 31 E. 10th St., New York, N.Y. 10003. \$30.00.

Book reviews should probably be more current than this one. However, *Botanico-Periodicum-Huntianum* is not something that one can read quickly and evaluate, much less at bed time. After having used *B-P-H* for three years, I think that I can say something informative about it.

*Botanico-Periodicum-Huntianum* is a compendium of titles and their unambiguous abbreviations of "information on all periodical (serial) publications that regularly contain . . . articles dealing with the plant sciences and botanical literature . . ." The editors have produced an excellent, accurate, and most helpful reference work. To be sure there are some omissions, for instance, I cannot find *The Blue Bird* listed. In time, though, those who are interested in *B-P-H* will send additions and corrections to the Hunt Library. The beauty of *B-P-H* is that the information in it is also stored in a computer, hence corrections, additions, and new editions, can be accomplished easily. *Botanico-Periodicum-Huntianum* is an excellent example of the intelligent use of computer technology.

The names of many journals are short and one can agree with E. D. Merrill in his essay "One-Name Periodicals" (*Brittonia* 1:1-5. 1931) on the appropriateness of one-word titles. Certainly for the sake of convenience, brevity, and ease of use, such titles as *Rhodora*, *Madroño*, *Castanea*, *Erythea*, *Muhlenbergia*, *Sida*, *Brittonia*, *Nemophila*, *Werdenda*, *Torreya*, *Watsonia*, and *Aliso*, to mention only a few, are preferable to longer names. There is nothing wrong with *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club*, *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden*, or *Transactions of the Linnean Society of London*, but they are more cumbersome. By and large, though, it is governments that create the worst bibliographic nightmares. In the United States, the Department of Agriculture, which includes the Forest Service, is a particularly bad offender. Is it any wonder that many librarians do not like to work in "government documents"?

Some may object to the way in which journal titles have been abbreviated. For instance some may object that the *Botanical Gazette* is abbreviated to *Bot. Gaz.* (*Crawfordsville*). But this is bound to happen once a system is set up to insure completely unique and unambiguous abbreviations. Consistency has been said to be the hobgoblin of little minds. Perhaps in some situations it is, but in the writing of dictionaries, glossaries, floras, and *B-P-H*'s, consistency is of the utmost importance. Without it why even bother? Consistency is important in such works, and I have yet to hear anyone demand that "n" come before "m."

The editors of *B-P-H* and the Hunt Library, now officially known as the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, are to be congratulated on this fine and most important compendium.—JOHN H. THOMAS, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305.